

PRESS RELEASE

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CONYERS SAYS PASSAGE OF TAUZIN-DINGELL WILL DESTROY THE VIBRANT COMPETITION IN THE BROADBAND MARKET

Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee issued the following statement regarding the Tauzin-Dingell bill:

“Only if you like the monopoly control of your local telephone market – which leads to high prices, poor service, and less innovation – could you love the Tauzin-Dingell bill, which will create a mirror image of that monopoly control in broadband.

The fate of the bill now rests solely with Speaker Hastert. A decision on whether to vote on the bill will be made in the next 2 weeks. I urge my friends here in Illinois to call Speaker Hastert to tell him that bringing up the Tauzin bill this year would devastate the competitive industry that works so well here.

There is no appetite for this bill. In a new national poll released yesterday, 63% of the people say that the Tauzin bill will lead to higher DSL prices because the competition will be eliminated.

Since the passage of the ‘96 Telecom Act, the Bells have failed to comply, resulting in numerous fines by the FCC. Just this week we learned that SBC paid \$3.51million for not meeting the requirements of the Act. That is why I am today requesting that the GAO report to Congress on the fines levied on the Bells for violations of the ‘96 Act.

Just look at the story of FOCAL here in Chicago. After passage of the ‘96 Act, a few people saw an opportunity to capitalize on the Regional Bells’ history of poor service and customer care. Five years later, FOCAL is a \$230 million business, has installed over 650,000 network lines and serves half of the Fortune 100.

Let’s be honest: the Tauzin bill guts the market-opening, pro-competitive requirements of the ‘96 Act. It eliminates the incentives entrepreneurs have had to enter the market.

Passage of the Tauzin bill would:

- **Put at least 77,000 CLEC employees out of work.**
- **Put 150 CLECs out of business.**
- **Vaporize over \$56 Billion in telecom network infrastructure built by CLECs over the past 5 years.**

Competition should be our religion in telecommunications. It should be our credo. It is the touchstone for lower prices, better services, and for unleashing the innovative creativity that has built our new economy from the ground up.

We will continue to work in Washington, Chicago and at events like these around the country to make sure that proposals like the Tauzin bill do not destroy the vibrant competition currently growing in the broadband market.”